DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 342 142 EC 300 901

TITLE	The Right to Fair and Equal Treatment: A Straightforward Guide to Human Rights and the Canadian Human Rights Act.
INSTITUTION	G. Allan Roeher Inst., Toronto (Ontario).
REPORT NO	ISBN-0-920121-99-3
PUB DATE	91
NOTE	41p.; Foreword by Steven Lewis.
AVAILABLE FROM	G. Allen Roeher Institute, Kinsmen Building, York University, 4700 Keele St., North York, Ontario M3J 1P3, Canada.
PUB TYPE	Guides - Non-Classroom Use (055)
EDRS PRICE	MF01 Plus Postage. PC Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS	Civil Liberties; *Civil Rights; *Civil Rights Legislation; *Due Process; Educational Games; Employment; *Equal Protection; Federal Legislation; Foreign Countries; Grievance Procedures; *Mental Retardation; Social Discrimination; Social Integration
IDENTIFIERS	Canada; *Canadian Human Rights Act; *Canadian Human Rights Commission; Self Advocacy

ABSTRACT

This book, written in simple language, explains the Canadian Human Rights Act and how and when it can be used to assist individuals with mental handicaps. The book is designed to help people learn their rights as citizens of Canada and learn that if something wrong is done to them they can do something to change it. It explains what human rights are and how people with a mental handicap are often treated by the rest of society in a way that ignores their human rights. The book's seven chapters cover: laws that protect people from discrimination and which levels of government protect which rights; protection under the Canadian Human Rights Act; responsibilities of the Canadian Human Rights Commission; types of complaints that can be filed with the Commission; steps of the complaint process; using the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms to attack barriers; and helpful hints. The book contains a detachable board game called "Rights and Wrongs"; a "find-the-words" game; a glossary of relevant terms; a list of 9 books and a magazine with useful information for people with a mental handicap and their family and friends; and a list of the regional Canadian Human Rights Commission offices. (JDD)

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THE RIGHT TO FAIR & EQUAL TREATMENT

A Straightforward Guide to Human Rights and the Canadian Human Rights Act

With a Foreword by Stephen Lewis

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THE G. ALLAN ROEHER INSTITUTE

Constitution Act, 1982

CANADIAN CHARTER OF RIGHTS AND FREEDOMS

Equality before and under the law and equal protection and benefit of the law

15. (1) Every individual is equal before and under the law and has the right to the equal protection and equal benefit of the law without discrimination and, in particular, without discrimination based on race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, sex, age, or mental or physical disability.

Affirmative action programs

(2) Subsection (1) does not preclude any law, program or activity that has as its object the amelioration of conditions of disadvantaged individuals or groups including those that are disadvantaged because of race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, sex, age, or mental or physical disability.

THE RIGHT TO FAIR AND EQUAL TREATMENT

A Straightforward Guide to
Human Rights and the Canadian Human Rights Act

With a Foreword by Stephen Lewis

The G. Allan Roeher Institute

Know Your RIGHTS

Seek True JUSTICE

Gain Real POWER

Printed on recycled paper

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The G. Allan Roeher Institute
Kinsmen Building, York University
4700 Keele Street
North York, Ontario
M3J 1P3

Institute Director:	Marcia H. Rioux
Project Coordinator:	Marcia H. Rioux
Assistant Project Coordinator:	Barb Goode
Writer/Concept Design:	Josephine V. MacFadden
Photography:	Nir Bareket
Publications Editor:	Laura Code
Desktop Publishing:	Victor Salus

ISBN #0-920121-99-3

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From the Director

This is the third book in our *Rights, Justice, Power* series. These books provide information about the issues facing people with mental handicaps. In a lot of cases the information that is provided to people is so complicated and technical that it is not very helpful. We are trying to make it easier to understand.

In this book, you will find information about your human rights* and the power you have to make sure you are treated like other citizens of Canada.

It is important to know that, as Canadians, we all have rights, no matter what silly label someone may have given us. The label doesn't mean that people can treat us unfairly*. We have laws that protect us all from such discrimination*. The Charter* of Rights and Freedoms says we are all equal*. The federal and provincial human rights laws (they are also called "Acts") give all people a way to complain if someone treats them unfairly, whether it is when they are doing a job or using a service.

These human rights laws are important. But the laws are only helpful if we know how to use them. The following chapters explain the *Canadian Human Rights Act**. They explain how and when to use it. We hope this will give people real power. The people at the Canadian Human Rights Commission are there to help, and anyone can phone or write them for more information.

There are many people to thank for this book. The Literacy Secretariat of the Secretary of State gave us the money to do this series of books. They think it is important to have information that many people can understand. Barb Goode has worked hard as the project's assistant coordinator. The team of advisors, who are self-advocates, provided many of the ideas and suggestions that are in this book. Stephen Lewis' foreword shows how strongly he believes in rights for everyone. Nir Bareket took the photographs and Jo MacFadden helped to write the book and put it all together. Many others helped by reading drafts of the book to make sure the facts were right. I'd like to thank all these people. Please let us know if you find the book helpful.

Marcia H. Rioux
Director

*Words with a * after them are explained in the dictionary on pages 22 and 23 of this book.

Preface

Since I have been involved in writing these books, I've learned that I have more power to change my life than I thought I had.

I hope that these books will help empower other self-advocates like myself to learn more.

I also think in some ways that, by writing these books, we also help non-handicapped people see that complicated material can be made into simple and plain language for all. People have to realize that all people can understand anything if the language is right.

This third book will help people learn their rights as citizens of Canada and to learn that if something wrong is done to them they can do something to change it. With this book we will be able to know when we are treated differently and who to go to for help.

For this book we asked Stephen Lewis to help us. Stephen Lewis is a well-known human rights activist. He was Canada's representative to the United Nations. We can learn about our rights from him. I would like to thank him.

Barb Goode
Assistant Project Co-ordinator

The following people were advisors to the *Rights, Justice and Power* series

Beth Foulkes
Marcia Marcaccio
Barry Smith
Mary Rusk
Patty ODonnell
Ann West

Thanks to them all.

Foreword by Stephen Lewis

In many countries of the world, people have no human rights. Their governments treat them in cruel and nasty ways, but there are no laws to protect* them. And there is absolutely no way of doing anything about it.

Happily, things are different in Canada. Here, the *Charter of Rights and Freedoms*, the *Canadian Human Rights Act*, and the Canadian Human Rights Commission all guarantee* the rights of every citizen. And I mean every citizen, including people with a mental handicap.

That's a big change from what used to be. Until just a few years ago, discrimination* and prejudice* towards people with a mental handicap was very widespread. No one protected or defended their rights. But since 1985, as this book shows, people with mental disabilities have acted as self-advocates, filing complaints* and demanding justice*.

Its a struggle that will never end. But we've come an incredibly long way. And now people who feel that their rights have been abused, or taken away, should fight back. They can go to the Canadian Human Rights Commission, or one of the Provincial Human Rights Commissions, and demand fair treatment.

Rights are not just the privilege of a few. They belong equally to all of us.

Stephen Lewis
Human Rights Activist

*Words with a * after them are explained in the dictionary on pages 22 and 23 of this book.

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights

In 1948, Canada signed the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. This showed that Canada agreed with what it says. The Declaration says, "All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights."

The Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms

In 1985, the Canadian Charter of Charter Rights and Freedoms came into effect. It is the highest law and guarantees the rights and freedoms of all people living in Canada. It says all people are equal. The Charter says that this includes Canadians with physical and mental disabilities.

The Canadian Human Rights Act

In 1977, Canada passed a Human Rights Act. It says that everyone has the right to equal chances to live the life that he or she is able to live and wishes to live. It goes on to say that discrimination must not come in the way of this human right for any of the following reasons:

- race
- colour
- age
- marital status
- pardoned conviction
- national or ethnic origin
- religion
- sex
- family status
- physical or mental handicap

These "grounds* for complaint" are explained on page 10.

INTRODUCTION

This book is about human rights*. It explains what human rights are and how people with a mental handicap are often treated by the rest of society in a way that ignores their human rights. The book explains the Canadian Human Rights Act* and how people can use it to have more control over what happens to them in their lives. It shows how laws are used to get fair* and equal* treatment.

Feeling Alright

People feel alright when there are laws which protect* them from harassment* and discrimination*. With laws to protect them, people have a better chance of having good food, a real job, a decent place to live, and enough money to be independent and do the things they like to do. People feel alright as long as they are loved, needed and included by their family, friends and society. Everyone feels better when they are treated well by their family, their neighbours, the people they meet, and their employers.

Labelled and Put Aside

Most people with a mental handicap don't have a chance to be alright. Their troubles and problems often begin at birth, when they are labelled as mentally handicapped. As soon as a person is labelled as mentally handicapped, he or she might treated differently than other people. He or she might even be put in an institution to live for a long time.

Institutions Today

Today more than 15,000 Canadians still live in institutions. In addition, we don't know how many senior citizens who have a mental handicap are living in institutions and whether they are being denied some of their basic human rights.

*Words with a * after them are explained in the dictionary on pages 22 and 23 of this book.

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Life in an Institution

Living in an institution was usually horrible, and for the many people who live in institutions today, it still is horrible. People who live in institutions usually do not get to make many choices in their lives. They cannot choose the people with whom they live; they cannot choose when and where to go out; they cannot choose what they eat or when they go to bed. Sometimes people are punished for breaking rules. Usually they do not have any privacy. Life is boring and lonely.

Close All Institutions

The Canadian Association for Community Living wants all institutions closed. Forever. Their goal is that every person will live in his or her own home in the community.

HUMAN RIGHTS FOR PEOPLE WITH A MENTAL HANDICAP:

For TRUE JUSTICE* in Canada,
Human Rights MUST BE FOR ALL PEOPLE,

INCLUDING PEOPLE WITH A MENTAL HANDICAP

Our Society
Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow

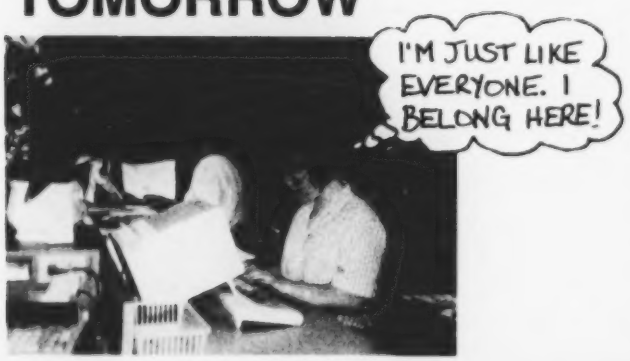
YESTERDAY

Since early days in Canada, people with a mental handicap were labelled and put aside.

TODAY

Today, people with a mental handicap are beginning to gain some of their rights. Society tries to include us with special help, but the help is usually just "add-ons" to the old system.

TOMORROW



People with a mental handicap are really part of society. The basic approach to participation for all people has changed so that everyone really gets an equal chance.

*Words with a ✱ after them are explained in the dictionary on pages 22 and 23 of this book.

CHAPTER 1

LAWS PROTECT PEOPLE FROM DISCRIMINATION

At one time, it was up to each person to be fair to other people. Laws were only to stop people from such things as stealing, killing or hurting a person, cheating or damaging property. For thousands of years, people have been punished for breaking such laws.

In the past there were no laws to prevent* discrimination. Discrimination is when someone treats another person or other people *differently* when it is unfair* to do so. Laws which stop people from being unfair to other people and from treating them *unequally* (which is also discrimination) are new.

Human Rights Laws in Canada are Federal and Provincial/Territorial*

In Canada, the Canadian government (which is also known as the "federal*" government) **and** the provincial/territorial governments have laws which protect the human rights of Canadian citizens.

The first human rights law to apply to all people in Canada was the Canadian Human Rights Act. It was passed in 1977. It is explained on page 8 of this book. Every province* and territory* also has it own human rights laws.

The Canadian Charter* of Rights and Freedoms

The Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms came into force in Canada on April 17, 1985. It says all people have the same rights because they are equal. The Charter is the highest law in Canada.This means that if another law would permit something which goes against the Charter, that other law must be changed.

Where to start

Because there are so many Human Rights Laws, you may not know where to go to complain* if you have been discriminated against. Page 7 explains which laws protect which rights in Canada.

My Rights are Protected by the Law

I HAVE THE RIGHT TO HAVE ENOUGH MONEY.
I HAVE THE RIGHT TO GO TO SCHOOL IN MY COMMUNITY.
I HAVE THE RIGHT TO USE PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION.
I HAVE THE RIGHT TO DECENT HOUSING.
I HAVE THE RIGHT TO ENJOY THE GOOD THINGS IN MY COMMUNITY.
I WAS LABELLED BUT I HAVE THE SAME RIGHTS AS ANYONE ELSE.

Human Rights Laws Protect People

*Words with a * after them are explained in the dictionary on pages 22 and 23 of this book.

Federal and Provincial Responsibility

Canada is a federation* of ten provinces and two territories. There is one federal government of all of Canada, and 12 other governments for each of the ten provinces and two territories.

The chart on page 7 shows you when each province and territory passed its own human rights laws, and the name of the law. These laws are slightly different in each province and territory.

It was decided that the federal and provincial governments would look after different human rights. This is how the responsibility* has been divided up:

1. The Federal Government

The federal government's Canadian Human Rights Act deals with complaints* in these areas:

1) problems for people employed by the federal government or by companies regulated* by the federal government;
2) problems about goods or services from the federal government;
3) problems about transportation between provinces.

Most people with a mental handicap have not had the chance to work for the federal government, so there haven't been many complaints about employers from people with a mental handicap. A few cases are given in this book showing how the Canadian Human Rights Act can protect people with a mental handicap.

2. The Provincial and Territorial Governments

Each province has its own government. The provincial governments are responsible* for many things that concern people, like education, health, and where people live. This book does not look at the responsibilities of the provinces. Some provinces have their own books to explain their human rights. There is a list of the provincial offices on page 29. You can write or call them for information or help.

Where to go for help

If an injustice* is done to you and you aren't sure where to go for help or how to make a complaint, you can ask advice from the CANADIAN HUMAN RIGHTS regional office nearest to where you live. There is a list on page 25.

WHO PROTECTS WHICH RIGHTS IN CANADA?

CANADA

Law: *Canadian Human Rights Act*

Date Passed: *July 14, 1977.*

Rights Protected:

Employment*; employment applications and advertisements employment policy; employee organizations; rights to goods, services, accommodations, transportation.

THE PROVINCES AND TERRITORIES

Province	Year passed:	Full name of law
British Columbia	1985	The British Columbia Human Rights Act
Alberta	1985	The Alberta Individual's Rights Protection Act
Saskatchewan	1978	The Saskatchewan Human Rights Code
Manitoba	1987	The Manitoba Human Rights Code
Ontario	1962	The Ontario Human Rights Code
(a new law was passed in 1982)		
Quebec	1976	La Charte des droits et libertés de la personne
New Brunswick	1973	The New Brunswick Human Rights Code
Nova Scotia	1979	The Nova Scotia Human Rights Act
P.E.I.	1976	The Prince Edward Island Human Rights Act
Newfoundland	1988	The Newfoundland Human Rights Code
Yukon	1987	The Yukon Territory Human Rights Act
N.W.T.	1966	The Northwest Territories Fair Practices Act

Rights Protected:

Looking for a job, working, looking for a place to live, using a service (like a restaurant), using a facility (like a park), or using an accommodation (like a hotel).

Human Rights Laws Protect People

*Words with a * after them are explained in the dictionary on pages 22 and 23 of this book.

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CHAPTER 2

KNOW YOUR RIGHTS:
Protection under The Canadian Human Rights Act

Imagine you have come to Canada from another country. You see a bus at a bus stop with people getting into it. Your legs are tired. You would like a ride too. But you don't know if that bus is for everyone. You wonder if you have the **RIGHT** to get on.

Is it important to know all about your **RIGHTS**? Do you always know when someone is discriminating against you?

The Canadian Human Rights Act forbids discrimination in:

Employment: For example, an airline cannot refuse to hire someone because they have a disability, when that disability does not affect their ability to do the job and does not affect the safety of other people.

Employment applications and advertisement: For example, when the government advertises for secretaries, it can not say that only women can apply.

Employment policy: For example, a person who is a member of a racial minority may not be prevented from taking a job training program because of the colour of his or her skin.

Employee organizations (such as unions): For example, a union cannot refuse to let a worker be a member of the union because the worker is from a different country.

The provision of goods and services: For example, a person who works in a bank cannot refuse to give a bank customer a loan, because he or she feels the customer is too old.

Accommodations: For example, a person who practices a religion cannot be refused the chance to rent space in a federal airport because people are afraid the unusual clothing he wears for religious reasons might upset other tenants.

Where to go to make a complaint

THE CONDUCTOR OF THE TRAIN FROM HALIFAX TO ST. JOHN WOULDN'T LET ME ON. HE SAID I WAS DRUNK. I WASN'T, BUT YOU KNOW HOW I SWAY BECAUSE OF MY EYESIGHT.
YOU HAVE A RIGHT TO COMPLAIN ABOUT HOW THEY TREATED YOU.
I WILL. BUT WHO DO I COMPLAIN TO?
THE CANADIAN HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION REGIONAL OFFICE IN HALIFAX. TRANSPORTATION BETWEEN PROVINCES IS A FEDERAL* MATTER.
WHAT IF IT HAD HAPPENED ON A HALIFAX BUS?
THE CANADIAN HUMAN RIGHTS OFFICES ONLY DEAL WITH TRANSPORTATION BETWEEN PROVINCES, NOT INSIDE THEM.
YOU FIND OUT THE MOST HELPFUL FACTS! CAN I CATCH A RIDE WITH YOU TO THE NEXT PEOPLE FIRST MEETING?

*Words with a * after them are explained in the dictionary on pages 22 and 23 of this book.

HOW TO MAKE A DETACHED BOARD GAME

IF YOU LIKE YOU CAN UNDO THE STAPLES OF THIS BOOK AND REMOVE THE CENTRE PAGE WHICH IS THE BOARD GAME.

THEN PUSH THE STAPLES BACK DOWN SO YOUR BOOK DOESN'T FALL APART.

NOW YOU HAVE A GAME THAT CAN BE KEPT SEPARATELY. YOU CAN STICK IT ON CARDBOARD TO MAKE IT STIFFER. IT WILL LAST LONGER.

YOU MIGHT PUT THE GAME, YOUR DICE, AND YOUR SMALL OBJECTS INTO A BOX OR BAG AFTER YOU HAVE FINISHED PLAYING.

Rights and Wrongs

What is *Rights and Wrongs?*

Rights and Wrongs is one way to learn about human rights — by playing a game. The BOARD for the game is in the middle of this booklet. You need to get (or make) your dice and small things to move around the board. **You Need:**

1. One dice (if you don't have one you can make your own).
2. A small object for each player.
3. The Board on page 23 and 24 of this book.

1. DICE

You need a regular dice one with six sides and numbers up to six. If you don't have one, you can make you own by cutting up a piece of paper into six pieces and numbering them from 1 to 6. Put the pieces in a box or a bowl. To "roll the dice" you just pick out a number.

2. SMALL OBJECTS

If you don't have any small objects from games, you can use buttons, coins, shells, pieces of metal, beads, etc.

How to play *Rights and Wrongs*

The IDEA of the game is to get to square number 50.
The first player at square 50 is the WINNER.

Rules:

1. 4 or 6 people can play.
2. Take turns at rolling the dice or picking a number.
3. Move your small object along the numbers. You always start at 1. Move the number of squares on your dice (or paper). Stop on the square.
4. If your square lands you at the bottom of stairs, you go up the stairs. Stay there. You have made a short cut.
5. If you are at the top of a slide, you slide down and stay there. You just roll the dice again on your turn.
6. Keep going around in turns until someone reaches Square 50 and **WINS.**

RIGHTS & WRONGS

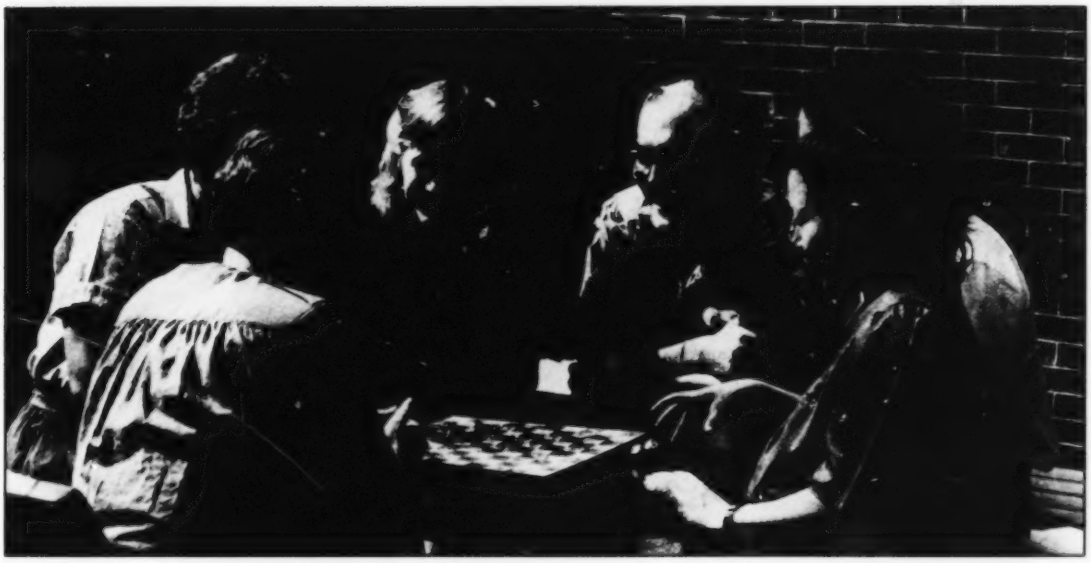
41 | You are harassed on the job because of your mental handicap. 42 | 43 | 44 | 45 | 46 | 47 | 48 | You aren't allowed into Canada because of your disability. 49 | 50

40 | 39 | 38 | There is space in the movie theatre for your wheelchair. 37 | 36 | 35 | You can't sign a lease for an apartment. 34 | 33 | 32 | 31

21 | 22 | A restaurant won't let in your seeing-eye dog. 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30

You don't need a medical exam to get a job. 20 | 19 | 18 | 17 | 16 | 15 | 14 | You lose your job because of your disability. 13 | 12 | You get the same employee benefits as everyone. 11

1 | 2 | Your school board makes sure everyone has a chance to read. 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | Your attendant gets to ride free on the train. 8 | 9 | 10



People who play **Rights and Wrongs** learn more about their rights.

CHAPTER 3

THE CANADIAN HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

A **commission** is a group of people with a special job. The job of the Canadian Human Rights Commission* is to make sure that the Canadian Human Rights Act is carried out properly. The people at the Commission judge human rights complaints to make sure everyone gets equal and fair treatment.

They investigate complaints and make decisions* when there has been discrimination. Everyone can use the services of the Commission when they think they have been discriminated against.

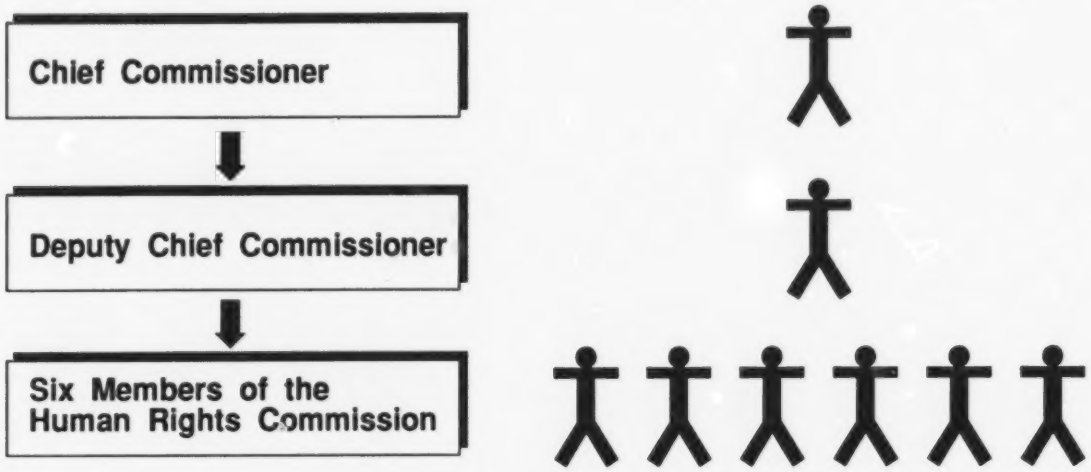
The Commission looks into complaints on these grounds*:

1. the colour of a person's skin (colour or race),
2. where a person was born or where their parents or grandparents were born (national or ethnic origin),
3. a person's religion,
4. a person's age,
5. a person's sex,
6. whether a person is married or not (marital status),
7. whether a person has children or not (family status),
8. a conviction for a crime for which a pardon has been granted later (pardoned conviction),
9. a person's disability (mental or physical disability).

Who pays for the Commission?

The Canadian Human Rights Commission is paid for by our taxes.

Who runs The Canadian Human Rights Commission?



Canadian Human Rights Offices in Canada

The Canadian Human Rights Commission has its head office in Ottawa. It also has an office in each region of Canada as shown on the map. It is important not to confuse these offices with the provincial human rights offices which deal with provincial matters. The addresses of the Canadian Human Rights Commission Offices in each province are on page 25.

The Canadian Human Rights Commission

*Words with a * after them are explained in the dictionary on pages 22 and 23 of this book.

CHAPTER 4

COMPLAINTS FROM PEOPLE WITH A MENTAL HANDICAP

What is a Complaint?

When something is unfair, people have the right to speak out, to complain*. If it is a matter of human rights, a complaint* is made to the Human Rights Commission. This is called *filing a complaint.*

A change for the better

In 1985, the law was changed to say that people could not discriminate against a person with a mental handicap. From 1985 until October 1990, there were 112 complaints filed with the Canadian Human Rights Commission on grounds of discrimination based on mental disability.

Most cases aren't over yet

Since complaints have only been filed since 1985, its not surprising that many complaints are still being checked. Great care is taken by the Commission to make sure justice* is done. This takes a long time.

Making a Complaint is a lot of work and worry

Although a lot of people complain to their friends, its not easy to go through with a complaint to the Human Rights Commission. It can be very upsetting and stressful. The Commission is willing to give advice and help. Talking to friends and family and people in groups you belong to can also help if you are feeling stress.

Complaints help things improve

Although it may be difficult, filing a complaint is important. It helps solve problems. Each complaint may lead people to check out the person's problem and work to set things right. Complaints make society more aware of the discrimination that is actually going on. And each time a complaint is settled things get a little better in the work for community living.

Some Actual Human Rights Complaints

Complaint 1: *Mental Illness*

John had a mental illness and couldn't continue to work for a leading Canadian bank. He was offered one year of benefits after he stopped working, but another person with a physical disability who also stopped working for the bank got two years of benefits. John asked for two years of benefits as well.

John won his case and the bank changed its way of treating people with a mental disability.

Complaint 2: *Unequal service*

Betty went to buy a bus ticket to see her sister in another province. The people at the ticket counter stopped serving her and served people behind her in the line. They said it was taking too long to get her information. She had to wait until everyone was served.

Betty has a complaint because she did not get equal service.

Complaint 3: *Being harassed on the job*

Steven was harassed* on the job by his foreman because he had a mental handicap. The foreman called him names and threatened to fire him in front of his co-workers, saying his work was bad. Steven became ill because of harassment and was forced to quit.

A Human Rights Commission said that discrimination took place because of Steven's disability and the company had to pay him for lost wages and damages to his self-respect.

*Words with a * after them are explained in the dictionary on pages 22 and 23 of this book.

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CHAPTER 5

THE COMPLAINT PROCESS

If you think you have been discriminated against, first ask for advice to make sure that you have a good reason to complain. It is part of the job of the people at the Canadian Human Rights Commission to give you this advice.

THE STEPS OF THE COMPLAINT PROCESS

Step One: *Contact the Commission*

Telephone, write a letter, or visit any office of the Canadian Human Rights Commission. The people at the Commission office will give you information to help you decide if you should make a complaint. For phoning long-distance, just ask the operator to place your call collect. The Human Rights office will accept the charges and pay for the call.

Step Two: *Filing and signing a complaint*

By law, your complaint must be written down and signed. The officer at the Canadian Human Rights Commission can help, or your friend or advocate can help you before you go to the Canadian Human Rights Commission. You will be asked to sign a statement to say that the written complaint tells exactly what happened.

No one may harass you because you make a complaint.

Settlement without a hearing:

During the investigation, the people involved often find a way to agree and settle their differences.

Step Three: *The Investigation*

A case must be investigated, which means all facts (also called evidence) are checked carefully by the people at the Commission. The purpose of the investigation is to get a clear picture of what happened. The person making the complaint is asked to explain what happened. The person who is complained about is also asked to explain what happened.

The Report

If the Complaint cannot be settled, a report is prepared.

The Commissioners then may:

1) Resolve the complaint,
2) Appoint a conciliator*, or
3) Send the complaint to a Tribunal* (a hearing).

Step Four: *The Tribunal (Hearing)*

All the facts are heard and a decision is made. Where discrimination is proven, a solution is ordered to correct the situation. You will be given this decision in writing. It will be handed to you, or mailed to you.

The Right to Appeal

If you disagree with the decision, or think it is unfair, you have the right to appeal. This means that a higher court will consider your case again. You can go as far as the highest court in the land — *The Supreme Court of Canada.*

Reasonable Accommodation*

"Reasonable accommodation" means that, in human rights decisions or settlements, people are expected to do extra things to help others who have a disability to be full citizens. But the people do not have to do things that might be unfair to themselves. For example, an employer might be expected to make a washroom accessible to an employee who uses an wheelchair, but the employer would not be expected to spend so much money that it would cause the business to close.

*Words with a * after them are explained in the dictionary on pages 22 and 23 of this book.

CHAPTER 6

ATTACKING THE BARRIERS USING THE CHARTER

People have been discriminated against and treated unfairly throughout history. People must advocate, protest and complain to get fair treatment. And it takes a long time.

Women are often discriminated against in the workplace and, in Canada, women earn only 66 per cent of what men earn. People who move to Canada from other countries often face discrimination because of their race or religion. They might be refused a place to live because someone is prejudiced*.

It is the same for people with a mental handicap. The system — the way society works — was not set up with them in mind, which means that their needs and rights have been overlooked. We call this systematic exclusion. Right now, the old system is changed a little here or there and services are added on to make up for this exclusion. But it isn't enough. The system will have to be changed in many ways so that the needs of people with a mental handicap are met through the system that serves everyone.

How does the Charter make this possible?

The Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms is meant to give everyone equal rights. In simple words, this is how it works:

- Because of the Charter, we can attack the barriers to equal rights. We can insist on programs and activities that will make society fair.

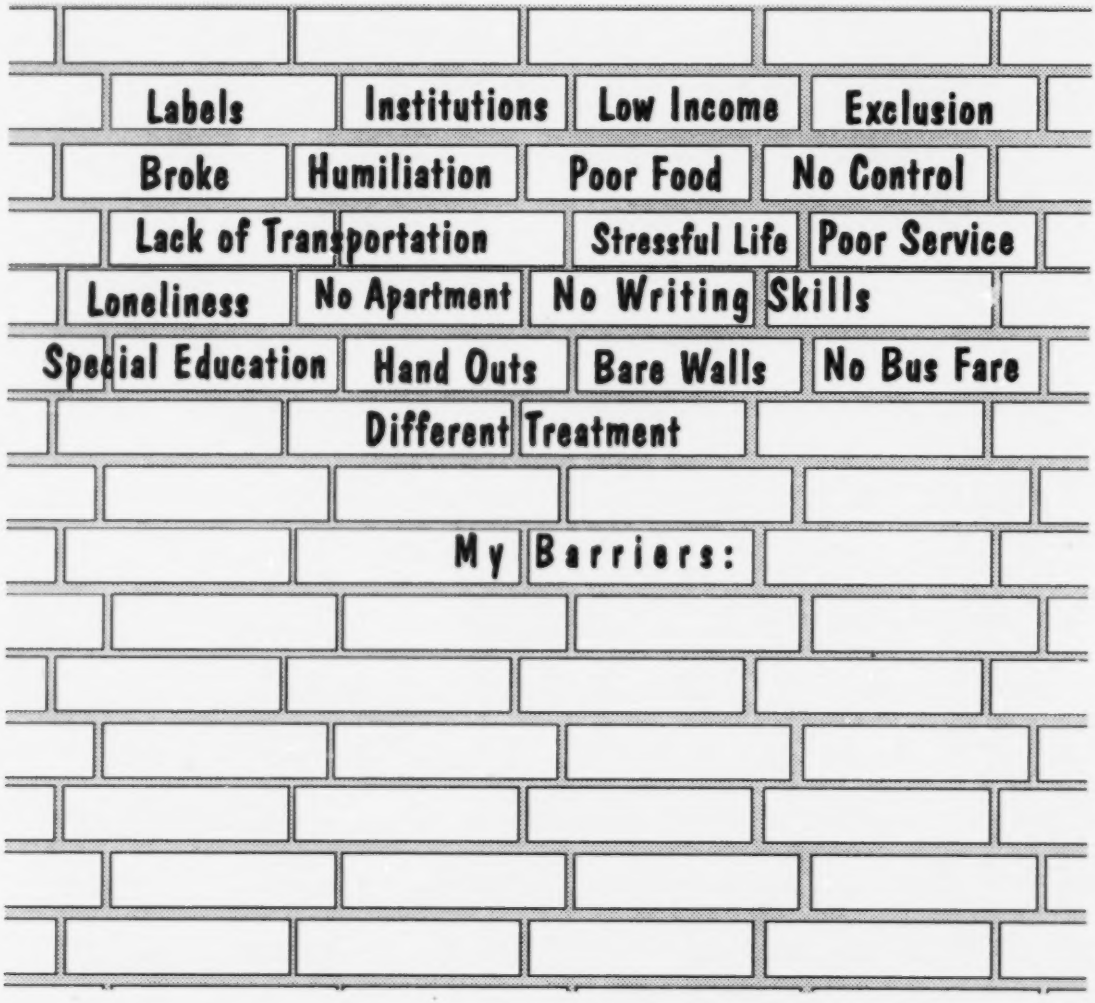
- The Charter also protects any special laws, programs or activities that will improve the conditions of disadvantaged people or groups.

The Barriers must come down!

Many of the barriers are found in the brick wall on the opposite page. Fill in the blank bricks with barriers that you face in your life. Brick by

brick, the barriers we face in our lives are coming down. On the other side of the wall is fair and equal treatment for everyone.

Canada's Barriers to Fair and Equal Treatment



OVER THE WALL IS EQUALITY* AND FAIR AND EQUAL TREATMENT.

Attacking the Barriers Through The Charter

*Words with a * after them are explained in the dictionary on pages 22 and 23 of this book.

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CHAPTER 7

HELPFUL HINTS

1. **Seek advice** from people *you* trust before you decide to make a complaint.

2. **Talk to your parents**. They may have good *advice*.

3. **Find out** where your *Canadian Human Rights office* is before you need to make a complaint. Be prepared with as much information as possible.

4. **Take a course** on *Human Rights*.

5. **Ask why** you are being treated *differently*. Maybe the situation will improve.

6. **Call** your local *member of parliament* for advice.

7. **Talk** to your *family or friends* about your complaint.

8. **Call** *People First*, or other helpful organizations.

9. **Call** the *Canadian Association for Community Living* nearest you. There may be a local office nearby.

10. **Learn your rights** and help other people to learn their rights. Be persistent. *Don't quit.*

11. **Never forget** that you have a *right to be treated fairly.*

12. **Stand up** *for your Human Rights.*

DICTIONARY WORD GAME

D	I	S	C	R	I	M	I	N	A	T	I	O	N
U	N	D	O	I	P	E	N	I	C	H	O	S	E
T	J	E	M	G	A	N	K	N	T	R	A	I	N
Y	U	S	M	H	Y	T	F	E	D	E	R	A	L
W	S	U	I	T	C	A	I	D	T	A	E	D	E
I	T	A	S	S	I	L	R	E	N	T	A	V	A
T	I	P	S	O	L	E	S	N	O	E	L	O	S
N	C	H	I	N	O	U	T	O	W	N	I	C	E
E	E	C	O	M	P	L	A	I	N	T	S	A	A
S	H	U	N	Y	R	O	T	I	R	R	E	T	S
S	P	R	O	H	I	B	I	T	E	D	E	E	E

See If You Can Find These Words:

Act	Advocate	Chin	Chose
Commission	Complaint	Discrimination	Duty
Ease	Eat	Eden	Federal
First	Injustice	Ink	Lease
Mental	Nice	Nine	Out
Own	Pay	Policy*	Prohibited*
Realise	Rent	Rights	See
Shun	Soles	Suit	Territory
Threaten*	Tip	Town	Train
Undo	Use	Witness*	

Circle the word when you find it and cross it off the list.

*Words with a * after them are explained in the dictionary on pages 22 and 23 of this book.

DICTIONARY

Here are the meanings of some of the words in this book.
Why not try them out on some friends?

Act: A set of laws.

Charter: A special law.

Complain/Complaint: Saying or writing down an injustice.

Conciliator: Someone to make a decision in a case that is fair to both sides.

Decision: A ruling about a complaint to the Canadian Human Rights Commission.

Discrimination: Treating people differently.

Employment: Having a job.

Equal/Equality: Where the results of things that are done are fair for all people.

Fair: Making sure each person gets what he or she deserves.

Federal/Federation: One country, but the parts of the country can act independently of each other.

Grounds: Reasons for something.

Guarantee: To promise something; to make sure something is protected.

Harassment: Bothering a person a lot.

Human Rights: Fair treatment and equal opportunity with all human beings.

Human Rights Commission: The group of people whose job is to make sure the Human Rights Act is properly carried out.

Justice: What is right, fair and just.

Injustice: An unfair situation or thing that happened.

Policy: The written rules that say how something is run.

Prejudice: Being against someone or something for unfair reasons.

Prevent: Stop from happening.

Prohibited: Not allowed.

Protect: Look after someone; make sure a person is treated fairly.

Province/Provincial: A name for ten of the parts that make up Canada. Things that belong to the provinces.

Reasonable Accommodation: Doing extra things to help people with a disability, but these things do not have to be unfair to the person doing them.

Regulated: Controlled, usually by rules or regulations.

Responsible: In charge of something.

Responsibility: Something a person takes charge of.

Territories/Territorial: The Yukon. The North West Territories. Things that belong to the Territories.

Threaten: To put pressure on someone by promising harm or a punishment.

Tribunal: A meeting of people where facts in case are heard and a decision is made.

Unfair: Not fair or not right.

Witness: Someone who can give the facts of a case.

MY DICTIONARY WORDS

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Useful Books

Here is a list of books that you can get from The G. Allan Roeher Institute. The books have useful information for people with a mental handicap, and for their families and friends.

•**Righting Wrongs**: Disability, Your Ombudsman and You. (1989)

•**Take Action — Stand Up For Your Rights**: Self-advocates and the British Columbia Human Rights Act. (1990)

•**The Right to Have Enough Money.** (1990)

•**The Right to Read and Write.** (1991)

•**Making Friends**: Developing Relationships Between People Who Have a Disability and Other Members of the Community. (1990)

•**Income Insecurity**: The Disability Income System In Canada. (1988)

•**Poor Places**: Disability Related Residential and Support Services. (1990)

•**The Power of Positive Linking**: How Families Can Empower People Who Have Mental Handicaps Through Mutual Support Groups. (1989)

•**Leisure Connections**: Enabling People With A Disability to Lead Richer Lives in the Community. (1989)

•**entourage**: A magazine about how people can get support in the community to live, learn, work and have fun. It comes out 4 times a year.

CANADIAN HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION OFFICES

Call or write to the Head Office, or the Regional Office nearest your home if your problem is under federal control:

Head Office: Canadian Human Rights Commission
400-90 Sparks Street
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 1E1
Tel: (613) 995-1151 Visual Ear: (613) 996-5211

Regional Offices:

ATLANTIC REGION
Canadian Human Rights Commission
300-5670 Spring Garden Road
Halifax, Nova Scotia B3J 3J2
Tel: (902) 426-8380
Visual Ear: (902) 426-9345

QUEBEC PROVINCE
Canadian Human Rights Commission
330-1253 McGill College Avenus
Montreal, Quebec H3B 2Y5
Tel: (514) 283-5218
Visual Ear: (514) 283-1869

NATIONAL CAPITAL REGION
Canadian Human Rights Commission
915-270 Albert Street
Ottawa, Ontario K1P 5W3
Tel: (613) 996-0026
Visual Ear: (613) 998-5927

ONTARIO REGION
Canadian Human Rights Commission
623-55 St. Clair Avenue East
Toronto, Ontario M4T 1M2
Tel: (416) 973-5527
Visual ear: (416) 973-8912

PRAIRIE REGION
Canadian Human Rights Commission
718-275 Portage Avenus
Winnipeg, Manitoba R3B 2B3
Tel: (204) 983-2189
Visual Ear: (204) 983-2882

ALBERTA AND NORTHWEST TERRITORIES
Canadian Human Rights Commission
401-10506 Jasper Avenue
Edmonton, Alberta T5J 2W9
Tel: (403) 420-4040
Visual Ear: (403) 420-4108

WESTERN REGION
Canadian Human Rights Commission
600-609 West Hastings Street
Vancouver,
British Columbia V6B 4W4
Tel: (604) 666-2251
Visual Ear: (604) 666-3071

Provincial Human Rights Commissions

The *Alberta*
Human Rights
Commission
#902 - 10808 99 Ave.
Edmonton, Alberta
T5K 0G5

The *British Columbia*
Human Rights
Council
815 Hornby Street,
4th Floor, Suite #406
Vancouver, B.C.
V6Z 2E6

The *Manitoba*
Human Rights
Commission
#301 -259 Portage Ave.
Winnipeg, Manitoba
R3B 2A9

The *New Brunswick*
Human Rights
Commission
Department of Labour
P.O. Box 6000
Fredericton
New Brunswick
E3B 5H1

The *Newfoundland*
Human Rights
Commission
P.O. Box 4750
6th Floor
345 Duckworth Street
St. John's
Newfoundland
A1B 4J6

The *Nova Scotia*
Human Rights
Commission
7th Floor
Lord Nelson Arcade
5675 Spring Garden Rd.
P.O. Box 2221
Halifax, Nova Scotia
B3J 3C4

The *Ontario*
Human Rights
Commission
12th Floor
400 University Avenue
Toronto, Ontario
M7A 1T7

The *Prince Edward Island*
Human Rights
Commission
P.O. Box 2000
3 Queen Street
Charlottetown, P.E.I.
C1A 7N8

Commission des droits
de la personne du
Québec
1279 boul. Charest O.
Québec, Québec
G1N 4K7

The *Saskatchewan*
Human Rights
Commission
8th Floor
Canterbury Towers
224 4th Avenue
Saskatoon
Saskatchewan
S7K 2H6

Northwest Territories
Fair Practices Office
Department of Justice
Territorial Government
of the Northwest Territories
Box 1320
Courthouse
Yellowknife, N.W.T.
X1A 2L9

The *Yukon*
Human Rights
Commission
205 Rogers Street
Whitehorse, Yukon
Y1A 1X1

The National People First Organization
Kinsmen Building, York University
4700 Keele Street
North York, Ontario, M3J 1P3

The G. Allan Roeher Institute

At The G. Allan Roeher Institute, many people are working to make things better for Canadians who have a mental handicap. Many self-advocates help and advise the people at The Institute.

What are the aims of The Institute?

There are ***two aims***, mainly.

1. Finding ways to make sure we can live, and work, in our own communities.
2. Helping to spread the right ideas so everyone in the community is up-to-date about what we really need.

How does The Institute do its work?

There are ***five ways***, mainly.

1. Doing ***Research***. Especially into what works best for most of us. And also into ***funding***. How to get that ***extra*** money that we need.
2. ***Publishing*** the results of the research, and so ***influencing*** choices that affect us.
3. ***Training*** people so they understand our needs better. Things like our human rights and other things that are important to us, such as being educated in the community, and supported work.
4. Providing ***Up-To-Date Information*** to the public, professionals and community groups.
5. Sending out our magazine, **entourage,** four times a year.

Canadian Association for Community Living

The G. Allan Roeher Institute is sponsored by the Canadian Association for Community Living. This is the organization that brings together 400 local groups with one group from every province and territory to work for us.

For more information, please write to us at:

Kinsmen Building, York University
4700 Keele Street
North York, Ontario, M3J 1P3

You're welcome to phone The Institute at: **(416) 661-9611** if you have any questions, or you want to contribute your thoughts and comments.

"Rights are not the privilege of a few. They belong equally to all of us."

Stephen Lewis
Human Rights Activist
from his foreword to
The Right to Fair and Equal Treatment

KNOW YOUR **RIGHTS**

SEEK TRUE **JUSTICE**

GAIN REAL **POWER**

The G. Allan Roeher Institute
4700 Keele Street, Kinsmen Building
York University
North York, Ontario, M3J 1P3